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# **The Better Utilization of Public Facilities in Maryland**

*Ideas and  
Options*



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THE BETTER UTILIZATION OF PUBLIC FACILITIES IN MARYLAND: IDEAS AND OPTIONS

CO-SPONSORED AND PUBLISHED BY

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF BOARDS OF EDUCATION

MARYLAND ASSOCIATION OF COUNTIES

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PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS ASSOCIATION OF MARYLAND

DECEMBER 1984

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### Acknowledgements

This publication represents an attempt to share information and present examples of cooperative efforts to improve the utilization of existing public school buildings or former school buildings. The examples cited indicate what has or has not worked given particular circumstances; conditions in a different area may result in different solutions and decisions.

Many people spent many hours preparing the material for this publication. The continuing support of the sponsoring agencies and associations has made the publication possible. Judy Guenter, Carol Larkin, and Tammy Miller patiently typed, retyped, and assisted in proofreading the drafts of the manuscripts.

A special thank you is extended to the contributors for their cooperation, concern, and enthusiasm for this project.

This publication does not represent the first nor the last words on this subject. Comments of the reader and other examples are therefore solicited.

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## INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

Judith A. Koloski and Yale Stenzler

Public school systems in the State of Maryland, as well as those in many other states across the nation, have experienced a significant decline in enrollment during the past decade--a trend which will continue for the next several years. Projections in Maryland show total public school enrollments should begin to increase in 1988-89. This increase has already begun in the lower elementary grades; however, declining enrollment is projected in the secondary grades through 1990-91. Variations will, of course, occur within and among school systems.

### STATE OF MARYLAND - PUBLIC SCHOOL ENROLLMENTS (SOURCE: DEPARTMENT OF STATE PLANNING)

	<u>1972</u>	<u>1982</u>	<u>1992</u> (PROJECTED)
K-6	505,626	336,791	384,010
7-12	412,960	355,308	273,480
<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>918,586</u>	<u>692,099</u>	<u>657,490</u>

This decline in enrollment has resulted in an excess of school space, particularly at the elementary school level. School systems have been forced to close public school buildings and at the same time have had to develop innovative ways to improve the utilization of those buildings that remain in service.

In December 1982, several state agencies and associations co-sponsored a statewide conference to provide a forum for the exchange of ideas, concerns, and information to assist school board members, county government representatives, and state and local officials as they strive towards better utilization of public school buildings. This publication documents some of the exemplary programs, activities, or concerns discussed at that conference. It is not meant to be prescriptive. Its purpose is to present ideas and options for utilizing space and facilities more efficiently.

The publication is divided into three sections:

- (a) The extended use/shared use/joint use of public school buildings that are owned and/or operated by a local board of education,
- (b) The use and reuse of surplus (former) school buildings that are owned and/or sold or leased by the county government,
- (c) The years ahead.

The sponsors recognize that particular circumstances in each school system and political subdivision may require or result in different and/or diverse decisions. Because these activities are constantly being addressed, new approaches and solutions will continue to be developed.

It is impossible to cover every aspect of the subject. Some policy issues have deliberately been excluded since they are best discussed and decided upon at the local level.

The authors selected by the representatives of the eight sponsoring state agencies/associations to contribute to this publication have attempted to present the issue or topic comprehensively with a fair appraisal (both pro and con) of its implementation. Views presented are those of the individual authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the sponsoring state agencies or state associations.

The sponsors welcome your comments, reactions, and reports of other experiences that pertain to the better utilization of public facilities. Furthermore, they are prepared to offer additional information and assistance to those interested in this subject.

EXTENDED USE/SHARED USE/JOINT USE

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

## EXTENDED USE OF SCHOOLS FOR ADULT EDUCATION

John H. Bloom

Several public schools in Charles County operate from 7:30 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. Others open slightly later, but routine closing time is equally late. These schools serve as learning centers for citizens of all ages in the county.

The phenomenon at work here is the growing realization that simple economics dictates the extended use of school buildings to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the millions of dollars of public funds invested in them.

Take the case of three schools in Waldorf, the heart of the rapidly developing northern area of the county and location of St. Charles, a planned community of 17,000 programmed to top 75,000 by the end of the century.

Public school classes start at Thomas Stone High School at 7:30 a.m., and the building is occupied afternoon and evening with extracurricular student activities. Some adult programs start around 3:30 p.m., bringing a new segment of the community into the building. The Parks and Recreation Department operates year-round programs here daily, evenings, and weekends and holidays.

Only a mile away, the old Waldorf Elementary School functions 13 hours a day as the Adult Services Center. While a formal evening high school attracts a number of adults, most of the programs are highly individualized and informal. A Multi-Service Community Center coordinates a career resource center, including training, placement, and information and referral services.

The Adult Services Center offers classes in adult basic education, adult general education, English as a second language, and GED test preparation. Many Southern Maryland students earn their high school diploma through the GED program. Other adults acquire their diploma via the External Diploma Program, housed at a nearby school. The old Waldorf Elementary building will be vacated and transferred to county government by the end of 1984. Most of the adult services will be relocated to a building near the central office in La Plata.

At John Hanson Middle School in Waldorf, classes for post-school-age deaf students and their families are held at night. Alcohol rehabilitation classes and general education classes for mentally retarded adults meet two nights a week, and the University of Maryland offers classes four nights. The George Washington University offers a complete master's program in Educational Administration and Supervision. The student body is drawn mostly from Charles

County, but many students also come from St. Mary's, Calvert, and Southern Prince George's.

Senior Citizens groups meet in schools and administrative buildings throughout the county; the Health Department holds physical therapy and well-baby clinics weekly. Finally, the Vocational-Technical Center offers adult classes in the trades several nights weekly.

Further uses are planned. A study is underway to determine if the Charles County Community College might use public school buildings at night, the public schools to use college space during the day, if a need exists. Initiative and imagination will open the school doors even wider to community groups. Necessity and practicality will see to that.

How successful has the school system been in this thrust to open the public school buildings to community groups of diverse interests? On balance, the program has fared well and the community interest is well served at relatively low cost. Predictably, some problems have developed, mostly concerning care and maintenance of buildings and equipment and reimbursement for breakage. In addition, the general public sometimes fails to differentiate that portion of the school budget which is required to support other-than-traditional-school programs. But on balance, the trade-off is worth it: the public gets more from its investment in the public school buildings, and the inconvenience to the school system is minimal. Extended use is here to stay.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGES AND PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Joseph F. Shields

Prince George's Community College began 25 years ago by offering evening classes at Suitland High School, a public school in the southern part of Prince George's County. Today the campus, consisting of several classroom and administrative buildings, is located in Largo and offers courses at 107 different locations throughout the county.

Two types of off campus facilities are used for the College's credit program. The first is an Extension Center which offers a variety of courses on a rotating basis. During the 1983 spring semester, the College offered credit courses at the following Extension Centers: Bowie, Northwestern, Oxon Hill, and Largo high schools; the Census Bureau; Goddard Space Center; Gallaudet College; Washington Suburban Sanitary Commission; and the Human Resources Administration. The second type facility is a Degree Center where students are able to complete all of their courses for an Associate in Arts Degree in General Studies without attending the main campus at Largo. Degree programs were offered at Laurel, Roosevelt, and Surrattsville high schools and Andrews Air Force Base.

The college has located sites and arranged for noncredit courses to be offered in public schools, private schools, churches, recreation centers, apartment complexes, community centers, shopping malls, hotels, government agencies, business offices, boys' and girls' clubs, libraries, nursing homes, hospitals, and the University of Maryland. Most of these sites are used at no cost to the College. With over 100 locations, it is easy to understand why the slogan of the Evening and Community Education Division is "Your Place or Ours?"

The initial plans for the College called for three campuses. The campus at Largo, located in the center of the county, was to be augmented by sites in the northern and southern areas. These plans have not developed, and public funds have not been expended for construction and maintenance of additional buildings.

The programs and courses have, however, continued to grow and expand, with the need for classrooms thus continuing. This need has required the Community College to be innovative in obtaining additional space. The use of public school facilities has been one approach. The public school system charges the College a minimal fee for the use of the facilities. The fees generally cover the actual costs to the board of education to operate (heat and light), and maintain (custodial janitorial services) the buildings or portions used by the Community

College. Public school buildings are advantageous because of their suitability to diverse instructional programs (often requiring special facilities and equipment) and their locations throughout the county.

The Community College has also received encouraging support from other public and private agencies. Often they have provided rent-free space for the programs. This has tempered the College's expansion into a larger number of public schools.

At a time of declining enrollments for most institutions of higher education, it is remarkable that the College continues to grow both on and off campus. This is partially due to the decision to use noncollege facilities located throughout the community.



## COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

John F. Lynch

At a time of declining enrollments, under-enrolled buildings, school closings, reduced and restrictive funding, and the community education movement, the idea of the schoolhouse serving populations both in and out of school and offering a variety of services is most appealing. Extensive use of school buildings after regular school hours and on weekends helps reduce vandalism, increases community support for the school, helps students and community residents develop a sense of pride in the building, and indicates to everyone that the school is sensitive to community needs. Although some teachers might not want their classrooms used and custodians often complain that their cleaning schedule is always being disrupted, the advantages far outweigh the complaints.

The Somerset County Multi-Service Community Center (MSCC) has been functioning for approximately four years at a high school in one of the county's main population centers, with satellite centers in three other communities. The MSCC utilizes school facilities by coordinating educational, vocational, employment, recreational, and other human services for both the in-school and out-of-school populations.

Adult General Education, Adult Basic Education, and GED classes; the External Diploma Program; adult vocational training as well as vocational and career counseling, job placement, career and employment assessment, and skill enhancement and upgrading are all available through the Center. Working closely with employment security, the MSCC staff helps persons seeking employment obtain their high school diplomas or meet a specific employment certification requirement. In addition, the school libraries are open for public use; recreation classes are scheduled at the same location; information and referrals to other agencies are processed; and personal counseling is available.

One of the unique aspects of the MSCC is that it is designed to immediately meet any identified need. The local sheriff's department was in jeopardy of losing certification because some deputies lacked required training. The only available training was 150 miles away; the MSCC arranged to bring the training to the deputies. When the Poplar Hill Pre-Release Unit was looking for an agency to develop viable vocational training experience for their inmates, the MSCC arranged and coordinated the program. In fact, over the past 2-1/2 years, 144 inmates have been trained and placed in jobs.

Through the intake and counseling procedures, individual needs are also identified. Recently, two local policemen needed to obtain their GEDs within 60 days or lose their jobs. The MSCC provided intensive preparation for these two men and helped them obtain their GEDs within the time limit.

A client's initial contact with the Center may stem from the desire for a high school diploma, but other concerns often surface during the interview. If so, proper referrals are made or advice given. These referrals are usually to a social service agency, the health department, Alcoholics Anonymous, or a drug rehabilitation program.

The MSCC has proven to be the one school-related program which has done more to enlist community support for our system and to use our buildings to their fullest.

The MSCC encourages coordination of services and the elimination of duplication of effort among county agencies. The school system no longer competes with Parks and Recreation or the local college for enrollments in similar classes. The University of Maryland Eastern Shore, Parks and Recreation, the public libraries, and the MSCC now publish one comprehensive brochure which lists all adult educational and recreational and counseling opportunities in the area. This is a savings for all county agencies and a much more efficient use of resources, both human and financial.

There are many possible opportunities which encourage the multiple use of school facilities for the community. The system must mandate more and better ways of utilizing funding sources and a responsive commitment to the community.

## DAY CARE PROGRAMS

Robert S. Posilkin

The availability of surplus space in the Montgomery County Public Schools has provided an unforeseen opportunity for the growth of day care programs.

Day care has become the largest single user of surplus space, not only because day care needs have grown so rapidly, but also because the board of education joint-occupancy fee structure places the highest priority on day care programs using surplus classrooms. These day care providers from the private sector, all certified as nonprofit by the Internal Revenue Service, now operate centers within 40 elementary schools. These day care programs help support continued operation of surplus space by signing lease agreements which include fees ranging from \$150 to \$200 per month per classroom.

The relationship between public schools and day care has several advantages. First, the available space is designed for use by children. Second, the space, requiring little if any modifications, is available at a relatively low cost. Third, the lease agreement provides many services including utilities, maintenance, janitorial, and security. This arrangement allows day care programmers to concentrate more on services for children than on facility matters. Fourth, "wear and tear" on the children is reduced since most students now attend their daily classes and day care in one facility, eliminating the need for costly and time-consuming transportation.

Rooms are leased from 7:30 a.m. until 6:00 p.m. which enables pre-school and kindergarten children to enroll in before-school and after-school care and remain in the same room during the school day, while school-age students attend classes in the same building.

Clearly, the lease arrangement with day care provides a source of revenue to the school system which defrays operating expenses. Using a sliding scale in the board's fee structure designed to encourage this type of user, approximately 50 percent of operating costs are covered. In exchange for the revenue, the school system is committed to making day care mesh smoothly with its daily operation. Often this requires adjustments by local school personnel. The greatest obstacle to these programs to date has been the added responsibility that the staff must assume at the local school level. Building services staff must incorporate day care into the daily cleaning schedule. Building principals must consider day care needs when scheduling school activities and ordering such

items as supplies and materials. But most principals now recognize that this additional service adds a new and healthy dimension to the school's program.

An additional problem has been assuring the availability of space from year to year. Changes in enrollment may require relocating the day care program at another facility after the lease's expiration. Such a change becomes difficult when a community depends on a center to serve its child care needs. Also, parents who are involved in the complex school closure process have encouraged the board of education to consider use of school facilities by day care programs as an important part of its decision-making process.

The link between the board of education and day care also requires a strong relationship with the county government, particularly in the areas of fire and health regulations. While the board of education leases facilities, no lease is signed without each center meeting stringent licensing requirements determined by county staff. And as the need for child care grows, the county may review and update policies for alternative facilities, licensing requirements, short term loans, and transportation.

Since 1978, the Montgomery County Public School joint-occupancy program has provided a safety valve to permit the rapid growth in countywide child care services while recovering costs associated with operating surplus space. As school facilities continue to close and, perhaps, student enrollments level off in their decline, the availability of surplus space may be reduced. In the meantime, the board of education will play a continuing role in the effort and looks forward to creative policies from the county and state which will assist in its endeavor.

## FEES FOR THE USE OF SCHOOLS

Charles F. Parvis

Extended use of public schools by community groups and organizations is widespread and, in many cases, is as intensive time-wise as actual school use. These uses frequently require funds above the budgeted amount appropriated to operate the public schools. A fee structure is therefore needed to offset these additional costs.

The Public School Laws of Maryland state that a reasonable charge for heating, lighting, and janitorial services may be made. Charges for commercial use of school space may also include rent and recovery of capital costs.

It is important to use actual data when establishing a fee schedule for community use. It is advisable to establish standard rates for high, middle, and elementary schools and also for special areas such as the cafeteria, gymnasium, or auditorium. Most programs tend to run for three to four hours. Consideration should be given to setting a minimum session rate, perhaps four hours. This also seems to be an acceptable minimum number of hours necessary to secure custodial/building supervisors for weekend coverage.

The first step in establishing a fee schedule is to determine the total costs for utilities (gas, oil, coal, electricity) and custodial services (salaries, supplies, equipment). The past year's billing for utilities, by type of school, can be used to establish unit costs per square foot. These can then be matched against projected costs in the following year's budget. Custodial costs can be similarly reviewed.

It is also possible to develop a standardized factor of cost between the different types of schools. Elementary schools, for example, could be assigned a factor of 1, middle schools 2, and high schools 3. Data to support these factors is essential for adoption by the board of education and community groups.

It is suggested that utility and maintenance costs be based upon the actual patterns of usage rather than spread over a 24-hour period. If schools are operating for ten to twelve hours per day, then these hours of operation could be utilized in the calculations rather than the seven or eight-hour school day.

The charges for use of special areas can be determined by using the square footage of the area as a percentage of the total school. An additional cost factor could be included to take into consideration the added costs of heating, ventilating, and/or cooling these high volume spaces.

In setting charges for weekend coverage, the average custodian's salary should be multiplied by the appropriate factor for the overtime rate.

To establish a fee structure for the use of space in an operating school during school hours or for the rental of a surplus school building, additional cost factors could be considered. These include the costs for grounds care, maintenance, water/sewer, insurance, and administration. The fees should be applied on a square foot basis.

Sliding scales for different types of groups might also be considered. School-related groups or other governmental agencies could be charged one level of fees, with another level for nonprofit groups, and a third for commercial entities.

Establishing a fee schedule is a complex task. It must be justifiable and affordable to using groups and, at the same time, adequately cover operating costs for the school system. School facilities are an important and vital structural element of a community; they can and should serve the needs of the citizens beyond the hours of nine to three.

## PARKS AND RECREATION

Robert R. Staab

The lack of available recreation facilities, indoor and outdoor, is generally a major deterrent to providing adequate recreation activities for both public and voluntary agencies. Often, particularly in densely populated areas, the school is the only public property that can be used for recreation. It is therefore quite natural that people should center their major attention upon, and endorse the use of, public school grounds and facilities for their recreation needs.

The joint utilization of facilities by both education and recreation programs not only meets the intrinsic need for providing recreation opportunities, but also increases the values of public properties for the owners and the taxpayers by extending the use of such properties without a significant increase in cost.

Education has a basic responsibility for developing in the individuals those skills, insights, and resources essential to the satisfactory use of leisure time--now and throughout life. The development of a program of public recreation, providing opportunities to use and enjoy these skills, is the basic responsibility of the recreation and parks agency. The two programs, education and recreation, are thus complementary and must be closely integrated. New vistas of unlimited opportunities for leisure pursuits unveil once the doors of education facilities open for recreation activities.

Baltimore County has long maintained a program of joint-acquisition development, use, and maintenance of educational/recreational facilities. Through cooperation and joint planning, the public is well served; tax dollars are wisely utilized, and residents of Baltimore County have access to educational and recreational activities at nearby sites.

Since 1970, Maryland has demonstrated its support for the joint use of school facilities for education and recreation programs through its funding of the School Community Centers Program (SCCP). Each year, the program provides over \$1,000,000 to 23 counties and Baltimore City to maintain recreational and supplementary educational programs at public school sites after regular school hours or weekends and, to a lesser extent, during the summer. This program has fostered the development of education/recreation joint use agreements in 21 of the 24 political jurisdictions in our state.

Total expenditures for the program in Baltimore County were \$118,000, which resulted in a per capita cost of \$10.81 per registrant and \$.55 per attendant. Services were provided by 1,433 volunteers. Through funds derived from this program in 1983, the county operated 22 different types of recreation activities at 65 school-recreation centers scattered throughout the county. These programs provided opportunities for 10,912 individuals with an attendance of 214,723. A multitude of programs, meeting a variety of different interests, were developed for all ages and special groups from tot fun centers to centers for the handicapped.

Through the School Community Centers Program in Baltimore County, activities such as the following were conducted:

Hobby Clubs	Teen Handicapped
Karate	Arts and Crafts
Young Adult Handicapped	Tumbling
Archery	Cheerleading
Gymnastics for Mentally Limited	Dance for Mentally Limited
Wrestling	Basketball
Drama	Drop-In Centers
Fun Centers	Junior Teen Centers
Soccer	Gymnastics
Tennis	Playgrounds
Summer Handicapped Camps	Swimming

Utilization of education facilities after school hours by recreation and parks provides a solid foundation for positive and constructive public action against the negative and destructive forces that exist when preparation and opportunity for wise use of free time is lacking. Here, then, is an efficient procedure whereby the child who prefers to steal second base rather than anything else is provided an opportunity to acquire those skills.



EXTENDED USE - "PRIVATE SECTOR"

Gail Ayers

In 1977, the Montgomery County Council appointed a task force to prepare a proposal for interagency cooperation in the joint use of school facilities. Citizens and policy makers joined forces to draft county and state legislation to create an interagency board. The law, School Facilities Utilization Act, was signed in October 1978, followed by establishment of the Office for Community Use of Schools in April 1979.

The Interagency Coordinating Board for Community Use of Educational Facilities and Services (ICB) is made up of the Chief Administrative Officer for Montgomery County Government; Superintendent, Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS); President, Montgomery College; Staff Director, Montgomery County Council; Commissioner, Maryland-National Capital Park and Planning Commission; four citizen representatives; and President, Montgomery County Board of Education (Ex-Officio Member).

The ICB is the policy-making authority for the community use program and the Community Use of Schools' office is headed by an executive director who operates the Community Educational Services Enterprise Fund. The fund operates within the county government structure. The budget is approximately \$1.2 million with reimbursement from the General Fund Subsidy to cover some costs for free use and the expenditures for elections. Fees from general and commercial users operate the essentially self-supporting fund. A percentage of utilities and supplies are reimbursed to MCPS for costs associated with community use as well as all costs including fringe benefits for supporting service staff, such as custodians, cafeteria workers, and technical service assistants.

Overall, the policy board is concerned with the maximum use of public schools by public and private nonprofit agencies and community organizations. The open door policy encourages nonpublic agencies to deliver their services in local communities throughout the county. The philosophy of government--not to offer or duplicate services that can be provided by the private sector--is consistent with the ICB's policy to permit extensive use of public school facilities.

The ICB approved a fee structure for all types of community users. There is free use Monday through Friday for youth activities led by volunteers. There are a number of private nonprofit organizations which offer recreational and leisure

services as well as an increasing number of private for profit users interested in using public school space. Commercial users pay the highest rates and must carry a statement on all advertisements that they are not sponsored by or affiliated with the public schools or county government. Rental rates for commercial users were developed by comparing market rates for comparable square footage in the county.

Over the past two years, private commercial users have leased auditoriums for lectures and performances. Gymnasiums are rarely available during November through March for commercial users because first priority goes to public recreation agencies and private nonprofit organizations, and demand exceeds the availability during the winter months.

Commercial revenue has been used to support free use and help support the cost for services in community schools. In Montgomery County, there are approximately 18 community schools staffed with part-time coordinators. These coordinators are responsible for developing community school services, citizen and user advisory committees, and providing a link between the K-12 program and the community. All expenditures for the director's office and community school services are supported by fees generated from users.

The public seems to be using the wide range of services available through the schools. Public agency use is high, and private nonprofit service organizations' use is increasing each year. Commercial use has doubled in two years. The economy, which has restricted building and facility expansion plans, most likely has contributed to the need to use existing facilities. The benefit to county residents is twofold: more services available close to home, and revenue generated from buildings which would normally lie dormant after 3 o'clock daily, weekends, and summer.

## LEASE AGREEMENTS

James E. Jennings

Leasing a public school building is one option to be considered by a school board or county government. Most of the usual problems encountered after a lease is signed could be minimized or avoided by more careful drafting of the agreement prior to execution.

The following items should be considered prior to developing a lease agreement and should be reviewed with legal counsel before finalizing the agreement:

Leased Premises: Gives legal description of leased property, definition of structure to be leased including square footage, number of buildings, and exact portions of a building

Term: Defines length of lease

Right of Refusal: Defines the potential of including a right of first refusal by the tenant to equal a new rental amount and/or terms based on an offer submitted by another party

Rent: Itemizes specific items, such as basic rental, and additional rental to include such items as maintenance, insurance, utilities, intrusion devices, and/or other services (The section should also include the method of adjusting the rental rate.)

Use of Premises: Defines the use and reuse limitations the tenant will have to operate within the facility

Assigning or Subletting: Defines the conditions when the tenant may sublet or assign the lease or a portion of the lease

Liability and Liability Insurance: Defines the scope of liability coverage required of the tenant

Fire Insurance: Defines the responsibility and amount of fire insurance necessary for the facility (Be certain to consider contents.)

Maintenance and Repairs: Defines who is responsible for different types of maintenance in the building (In some cases, portions of the responsibility are assigned to different parties.)

Facility Alterations: Defines the limitations which exist on modifications, including approval process, financial responsibility, and other requirements

Removal of Machinery or Equipment: Defines how facility modifications are handled when the lease is terminated

Eminent Domain: Defines the procedure in the event of condemnation in regards to the lease (Include the award of damages and outline each party's responsibility.)

Intrusion Alarm: Defines the responsibility for the use and rental of intrusion alarm systems in the facility

Community Use of the Facility and Playground: Defines community use of facility and playground and tenant rights in establishing charges for facility use

Right of Inspection: Outlines conditions for landlord inspection

Signs: Defines limitations on signage

Custodial Services, Utilities, Fuel, and Ground Care: Defines responsibility for the provision of custodial services, utilities, fuel, and ground care (A standard of ground maintenance should be discussed.)

Loss by Fire: Defines terms of termination in the event of fire or other casualty loss to the leased facility and who gets payment

Default: Defines right of landlord should tenant default on lease

Rights of Termination: Establishes the conditions under which the agreement may be terminated

Waiver: Defines the conditions under which conditions in the contract may be waived

Notices: Provides addresses and names of individuals representing the landlord and tenant to which any official correspondence should be addressed

Insolvency or Bankruptcy: Defines landlord rights in event tenant becomes insolvent or bankrupt

Strikes or Other Unusual Circumstances: Defines the obligations of the landlord in the event of strikes or unusual circumstances

Heirs and Successors: Determines whether the lease is binding upon the tenant's successors or heirs

Waiver of Subrogation: Determines procedure on waiving right of recovery under subrogation

Property Taxes: Defines tenant's responsibility in regards to property taxes attributable to the facility during the term of the lease

Attorney's Fees and Costs: Defines the manner in which attorney's fees are handled in litigation on the lease

Nondiscrimination: Defines nondiscrimination in all hiring or employment made possible or resulting from the agreement

Security Deposit: Defines amount and conditions of a security deposit, and how it may be withdrawn

Taxes: Defines the responsibility of the parties in regards to taxes

Permits, Laws, Ordinances: Defines the responsibility of each party in obtaining use permits and adhering to zoning requirements and other statutes

Any of the above factors that do not apply to your particular situation can be omitted; however, their omission should be a deliberate action.

## SHARED SPACE COUNCILS

Doris A. Eugene

The interest in shared use of schools is the natural outgrowth of a combination of economic, sociological, and demographic factors: nationwide decline in student population, increasing age of the national population, taxpayer "revolts" and the resultant tight fiscal situations, working mothers and their need for day care, energy problems, and more leisure time.

The dramatic declines in student population have forced school systems to close schools and "consolidate" student populations in order to more efficiently and effectively serve those remaining students. Convincing the public and parents of the fiscal and educational advantages of such moves has been a long, emotional, and arduous process for boards of education and school administrators. The process has been further complicated because of major problems in some areas where schools were abandoned and vandalized.

Citizens as well as government officials began to request alternatives to closing those facilities. Taking into consideration increasingly tight county budgets, several logical alternatives seemed to emerge:

- (a) Use surplus schools for other governmental services;
- (b) Sell the schools to non-governmental businesses compatible with the neighborhood which would return the schools and land to the tax rolls; and
- (c) Use surplus space in existing schools which could make it economically feasible to continue operating the school and offering an educational program to the students.

In order to effectively analyze these options, several counties legislatively mandated "Shared Space Councils" comprised of representatives of the various governmental agencies in addition to citizens selected from around the county.

The legislation that established the Councils in Baltimore, Prince George's, and Harford counties differs significantly from the legislation creating the Interagency Coordinating Board for Montgomery County. In the former, the local board of education has absolute authority with regard to the final determination for utilization of space in operational schools, and the county executive has absolute authority regarding the final determination of use for closed or surplus schools. In Montgomery County, the Interagency Coordi-

nating Board is empowered through legislation of the county council to make the final determination for use of space.

Shared Space Councils provide a forum for open discussion and exploration of alternatives for the use of space. Theoretically, it could act as a clearinghouse to assess needs of the various applicants and make recommendations to either the board of education or the county executive. Conversely, the very existence of such a council could create problems if the participants become insistent on approaches unacceptable to the responsible governmental body. For example, if the majority of the council views this process as a way to force local boards to keep schools open, the entire proceedings become counterproductive.

As the school population begins to decline and some space becomes available, use alternatives can be explored. Issues such as control of access, compatibility, and liability must be addressed. However, when the population of a given school drops below the level established for efficient and cost effective delivery of an educational program, no amount of space sharing will help to serve the children of that school. Therefore, while sharing of space appears to be an appropriate temporary solution, it is not the long-term panacea to keep all schools open. The educational program and needs of the children balanced with the economic situation must take precedence in determining any future use of school space.

SURPLUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS





## COUNTY GOVERNMENT PURPOSES

Harry A. Emmermann

Since 1973, the Baltimore County Board of Education has turned over 37 surplus school facilities to the Baltimore County government. Finding practical ways to recycle these facilities, which range in size from 2,580 to 131,000 square feet, is a challenge.

Schools were closed and then declared surplus due to one or none of the following factors: declining enrollments; replacing obsolete facilities; regrouping and consolidations caused by population changes and/or shifts; and constructing modern school facilities. During the early to mid-1970's the number of facilities turned over to the county was minimal from the standpoint of number and square footage. However, beginning in 1979 the process accelerated with more and larger schools being declared surplus.

In 1979, the Baltimore County legislators introduced state legislation to create the Shared Space Council for Baltimore County which would address the issues of underutilized schools and surplus schools. The legislation gives priority consideration to county government and community needs prior to leasing or otherwise disposing of any of the facilities.

The Shared Space Council consists of 22 members--a citizen member from each of the eight legislative districts and 14 county employees representing the key administrative offices and departments of the county and the board of education. The Council meets quarterly with special meetings as needed to discuss and make recommendations on the supplemental uses of underutilized schools and the use/disposition of surplus schools. These meetings are open to the public.

Often these meetings are very lively since the communities are concerned and upset about having their school closed. Once everyone understands that the Shared Space Council does not have the option or power to reactivate the school, the meetings generally become very dynamic. Extensive input addressing alternate uses and/or disposition of the surplus facility is provided by the members relative to their district and community concerns, the parties interested in using or acquiring the school, and the audience.

The Shared Space Council by law does not have the authority to render a final decision on an underutilized and/or surplus school; its function is to hear all of the alternative uses and proposals, determine the best and most viable alternative, and recommend same to the county executive for final

decision.

To date the Council has placed many programs in underutilized schools and found good alternative uses for most of the surplus buildings. Six have been sold outright, one has been razed, and two more are slated for razing to provide sites for new multi-purpose facilities and recreational uses. The majority, however, have been absorbed for use by other county agencies as well as state and community functions.

The prime county beneficiaries have been the Department of Aging, the Department of Recreation & Parks, Occupational Training Administration, and the Health Department. Because of the expanding services of these agencies, the surplus schools are providing strategically located facilities for them to meet the needs of the citizens in their communities.

A few facilities remain underutilized or vacant. Factors which contribute to unresolved school use are indiscernible appropriate and acceptable uses, funding constraints, and unidentified community needs. These few schools will be readdressed and the issues ultimately resolved.

## SCHOOLS FOR HOUSING

Bett Lewis

The aging of the State's population and the need to assure sufficient moderate cost housing for older persons on fixed incomes point to a need for public policy decisions. Matching the availability of surplus public buildings and affordable housing for the elderly seems appropriate.

The successful conversion of older, inner city schools for housing, particularly for elderly housing or for luxury apartments or condominiums is well documented. Exciting examples of this type of recycling can be observed in Baltimore and Washington, D.C.

Questions remain, however, for suburban jurisdictions as they examine this alternative. Most schools designated as surplus in these communities were built in the 50s and 60s and can sometimes adapt economically and esthetically to housing. But the charm and potential for exciting conversion of old inner city schools, which are often in highly desirable and convenient locations, simply do not exist in sprawling suburban subdivision settings.

These buildings of the 50s and 60s, usually situated in the center of residential neighborhoods, served as community foci. They are generally single story structures on parcels of land that have served as park and recreation space for the surrounding community.

In examining the potential for conversions to housing in suburban settings, the Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Development analyzed possible reuse of two schools. Through preliminary architectural and financial feasibility studies they learned a particularly significant fact. Suburban elementary schools with 30,000 to 50,000 gross square feet do not have sufficient gross floor area to provide the "critical mass" considered economically feasible for rental housing--particularly housing targeted toward low and moderate income households and the elderly. New construction on the sites as part of the adaptation process has been determined to be essential if this type of project is to proceed.

Funding for the conversion for housing can come from several sources. One project in Montgomery County was intended to be accomplished under a long-term lease with a nonprofit housing sponsor applying for Federal Section 202/8 financing (low-interest mortgage with Section 8 attached to the building). However, the project ranked second in the Metropolitan Washington area, and when

this funding source became unavailable, the nonprofit was unable to arrange financing which would make the project viable. A second school was to be converted through the County Revenue Authority, a quasi-county agency whose state charter includes the ability to borrow money or to sell tax-exempt bonds for these kinds of projects. But the former school's PTA initiated litigation, which has proceeded to the federal courts and shows no signs of concluding soon. A recent project in Baltimore City will combine nonprofit funds with private investment funding.

A project's feasibility may depend on interest rates available at the expected time of development. With reduced federal subsidies available, decision makers must utilize the best tools available. Tax exempt bonding and Montgomery County's Rental Supplement Program, which provides a subsidy similar to Section 8 for approximately 20 percent of the units in a newly constructed or adapted rental development, are two viable options. One more school in Montgomery County is now under consideration for adaptation, using these programs.

In addition to local initiatives, the state could consider additional support for the successful conversion of schools to serve the housing needs of low and moderate income families. The state could determine that this type of housing constitutes a "public purpose" and continue payment of any outstanding bond debt for the surplus school. The state might also provide financial assistance to jurisdictions converting schools to housing for low and moderate income households, in the form of low interest construction loans, mortgage interest write-downs or grants conditioned on meeting particular state-local housing goals.

Experience demonstrates that inner city former school buildings can provide attractive and economical shelter. The ability to recycle former school buildings in suburban settings is a challenge, and success will depend upon innovative decisions and cooperation at all levels of government.

## THE ROLE OF THE STATE CLEARINGHOUSE

Jeffrey D. Bresee

Although county governments must use their own staff and facilities to dispose of surplus school buildings or sites, they are invited, indeed encouraged, to utilize the resources of the State Clearinghouse for Intergovernmental Assistance. The Clearinghouse, located in the Department of State Planning, administers the Maryland Intergovernmental Review and Coordination process through which the views of state, regional, and local officials on proposed federal financial assistance and direct federal development actions are collected and transmitted. This office is also responsible for soliciting expressions of interest by public entities in state excess and federal surplus real property. In the latter capacity, the Clearinghouse can offer the benefits of intergovernmental coordination to supplement a county's procedure for disposal of surplus school buildings and sites.

To utilize the intergovernmental consultation process most effectively, a county should notify the Clearinghouse when it has decided to close a school and is preparing to identify alternative uses. This notification should contain information about the school, including site size in acres, building size in gross feet, age of original building, and additions. Information about availability of utilities, zoning classification of the property, desired sale price, and date of availability are also helpful.

Upon receipt of this information, the Clearinghouse will notify all state agencies whose functions involve the use of real property.

Interested agencies will contact the local jurisdiction directly, providing an information copy of any correspondence to the Clearinghouse. The final decision, of course, rests with the county government, subject to possible conditions required by the Board of Public Works at the time the school was transferred from the local board of education.

Using the Clearinghouse intergovernmental network can result in maximum notification coverage at a minimum of effort and can provide the county with an increased number of school building reuse options.



## NONPUBLIC SCHOOLS

George W. Fisher

Many boards of education and local governing bodies face complex policy decisions regarding leasing or selling surplus public school buildings for nonpublic schools.

In Montgomery County, fourteen of the 52 schools closed between July 1973 and July 1982 are being reused as nonpublic schools. Of the nine schools scheduled to be closed between July 1983 and July 1985, nonpublic school users have bid for three.

A situation arose recently regarding the proposed reuse of a surplus public school by a church affiliated nonpublic school. Some board of education and county council members questioned the nonpublic school use because the surplus school was located in a geographic area of the county where a voluntary desegregation effort was underway. The church affiliated school, though integrated, was seen as possibly drawing students, particularly majority students, from the public schools in the desegregation area. This controversy and the scope of nonpublic school uses of surplus schools caused the county executive to appoint a task force to study the issue and to advise him as to future policy and/or procedures. The task force report issued in September 1983 attempts to give some guidance and provide a process to review each application by nonpublic school users of surplus schools to determine the effect on the community.

In Prince George's County where 48 surplus schools have been transferred to the county government, only two are being used to house nonpublic schools. Three others are being used by churches that may develop school programs in the future. In both counties, nonpublic schools housed in former public school buildings were either already operating in the county or were serving substantial numbers of students from the county. However, the surplus public school facilities offered in many cases larger facilities which were in better condition than the facilities which were being used by the nonpublic schools.

There are some distinct advantages for using surplus public schools for nonpublic schools. Capital costs are reduced because the building does not have to be modified for the new user. Using a former public school as a private school is a compatible use not requiring a time-consuming rezoning process. In addition, if the surplus school is leased to a nonpublic school user, the school

could possibly be reclaimed for public school use if needed in the future. These factors make use by nonpublic schools attractive to both the county government officials responsible for surplus schools and the neighborhood in which the surplus school is located.

There are disadvantages, however. A major concern is the withdrawal of students from the public school system to attend the nonpublic schools. In Montgomery County, for example, public elementary school enrollment declined by nearly 19,000 students between 1975 and 1982. During this same period, private elementary school enrollment increased by 2,400 students. Although there were a number of other causes for these changes, private school use of surplus public schools may have been a contributing factor.

Also, continued use of a surplus public school as a nonprofit, nonpublic school keeps the property off the tax rolls. Other uses would put the property on the tax rolls and, therefore, generate income annually. If rezoning has a reasonable chance of being approved and does not require an inordinate amount of time, efforts can be made to get the surplus school property on the tax rolls.

Each local governing body and school system confronted with this issue should examine it as a policy matter. The decisions and solutions may be different in the political subdivisions because of variances in the factors and situations.



## THE MAINTENANCE OF CLOSED SCHOOLS

William R. Frey and Richard S. Nietubicz

The costs of maintaining surplus public schools can be minimized through careful planning. Factors considered in developing a plan should include: (a) present condition, (b) current value of the building, (c) probable length of vacancy, (d) anticipated future use, (e) susceptibility of school to vandalism, (f) availability of police and fire protection, and (g) funds and personnel available for its care. Each school will have slightly different needs due to its location, construction, age, condition, and the mechanical/electrical systems.

When a plan is developed for a particular school, the following actions should be considered:

Continuing security surveillance of both the interior and the exterior of the building is very important.

Routine inspections of the condition of the school's interior, exterior, roof, and mechanical/electrical systems should be made and their findings documented in a log maintained at the school. The log should also indicate when and how problems were corrected.

Automatic intrusion, fire, freeze, and high humidity alarm systems with remote monitoring should be provided, especially for buildings of value which are liable to be unused for an extended period of time.

Upon closing of the school, all items of material, equipment, etc., which would induce vandalism or burglary, could create a hazard, or cause or contribute to a fire, should be removed from the premises. Items which must be stored in the school should be stored in interior rooms out of sight from the windows.

The roof and perimeter of the building should be repaired to prevent damage from water leaks.

All broken windows should be replaced, both initially and then continuously thereafter.

All exterior openings (windows, doors, roof hatches, etc.) should be secured. "Boarding up" should only be considered as a last resort as it is initially expensive, invites vandalism, and results in adverse reaction within the community.

Valves on the domestic water, fire sprinkler and gas supply mains where they enter the building should be chained and locked in the closed position. Utility valves exterior of the building(s) which serve only the school building(s) and other non-needed uses should also be closed to minimize leakage in the underground piping and to provide additional protection. The actual sealing of these valves should be verified.

Piping systems and mechanical equipment containing water should be thoroughly drained to prevent damage from freezing and vandalism. Installation of additional drains may be required to ensure complete draining.

The decision to drain a piping system containing a glycol solution should be made only after consideration of the following: Its monetary

value - based on volume, concentration, unit cost, life expectancy (initial and remaining), costs of maintaining it within the system, possible and probable damage from vandalism, cost of draining the system, cost of storing the solution for future use and the cost of its disposal. Glycol solutions, although not considered to be hazardous waste, are toxic and should be disposed of in accordance with health department and sewerage authority requirements.

Mechanical refrigeration units, boilers, pumps, etc., should be "moth-balled" per their manufacturer's instructions.

Electrical circuits not needed for security systems, sump pumps, walk thru lighting, or other needed protection, should be secured in the "off" position or disconnected.

Traps of plumbing fixtures and floor drains should be filled with propylene glycol (low toxicity).

Central steam supplies should be disconnected and capped.

Oil storage tanks should be full of either oil or water to prevent the forming of sludge and rust due to condensation and to prevent tanks floating to the surface.

Plugs and caps on fuel oil and gasoline fill and vent lines should be dependably secured.

Fire department connections and propane tanks need appropriate attention.

Electrical/mechanical equipment should be tagged to prevent damage upon start-up.

Ventilation of closed buildings should be limited to the amount required to remove excessive dampness. Under certain conditions, ventilation may cause damage from condensation and therefore should be provided only when needed.

If the piping systems have not been drained, heating thermostats should be lowered for energy conservation and provide only enough heat to prevent freezing and excessive condensation.

The exterior appearance of the buildings and grounds should be well maintained. Damage from vandalism should be repaired promptly to avoid inviting further vandalism. The grass should be cut, the bushes and shrubs trimmed, and the grounds should be kept free of litter and debris. Trash receptacles should be provided and emptied regularly.

The plans which are developed for the maintenance of closed school buildings can have positive results. Local sanitation, health, fire, and police department personnel may be able to assist in preparing and implementing a plan. Individual school buildings with unique features or other factors may require special attention.

## SELLING SURPLUS SCHOOLS

Donald H. Ellis

Over the past several years, declining enrollment has forced the Prince George's County school system to close about 60 elementary and junior high schools. The Prince George's County government has thus been placed in the challenging position of finding creative reuses for these schools.

After failing to find other public uses for the buildings, and as vandalism and deterioration of the vacant schools increased, selling and/or leasing to the private sector became a viable alternative.

This was no easy task. No one had ever tried to place a market value on a public school, but after much research, a process was developed by staff appraisers. A range of prices was established, depending on the intended use.

Marketing strategies had to be developed. The leaders of county government had to be convinced of the idea of leasing and selling surplus schools. County legislation had to be drafted to allow the county to sell the property. Advertising campaigns were developed. Lists of potential purchasers were compiled, and the county ventured into the business of marketing surplus schools.

The first attempt at selling was done by advertising a school for sale at a minimum price and soliciting bids. But, to the county's surprise, only one bidder came forward each time. Needless to say, without competition, the county found itself in the position of accepting the lowest and only bid.

A major strategy reassessment took place. The county entered the real estate field like a private entrepreneur. A sales contract was developed, market prices were established, and lists of schools were advertised in local papers. The county offered innovative financing, low interest rates, and sales contracts on a first-come, first-serve basis.

The school marketing program took off. In about a two-year span, 21 schools were sold or leased to the private sector. Of these, 12 were sold for some type of commercial use including: office park, medical park, trade union offices and training facilities, small engine repair training facilities, high tech office park, 24-hour day care center, multi-use offices, association offices and training facilities, condominium housing, and service club headquarters. The other nine were sold or leased to churches for sanctuaries and/or church schools.

Many factors must be considered when selling a surplus school to the private sector. Some primary issues include: compatibility of proposed use with neighborhood, proper zoning, financing, permits, and approval of all governmental agencies.

The most important, perhaps, is compatibility with the surrounding neighborhood. Early contact with the community is absolutely essential. Once the community feels comfortable with a potential purchaser and proposed use, a major part of the battle is won. If a purchaser cannot overcome this hurdle, there is no need to proceed.

Marketing of surplus schools in Prince George's County has been and continues to be very successful. The process was approached in a positive manner, and the county is committed to making the best use of all surplus schools.

## SURPLUS PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND THE ELDERLY

James F. Chmelik

The elderly as a percentage of the total population in Maryland and throughout the nation has increased in the past ten years, with projections showing continued increases into the future. This trend results in increasing needs for programs and services for these citizens.

Public school buildings which once served a different population are providing an answer. Many school buildings closed during the last decade have become part of a network of senior centers which cover the state and serve as a focal point for service delivery systems.

The senior center program has developed into a statewide network since a mid-seventies study by the State Office of Aging demonstrated that surplus schools could serve as a core facility or a focal point for planning, organizing, and delivering services and programs to senior citizens. The study showed that schools were being closed as a result of declining student enrollment, not because the facilities were obsolete. It also noted that once a school building is surplus, the condition of the facility deteriorates markedly from lack of use and vandalism if no planned reuse is scheduled.

There were a number of reasons to use surplus school buildings: They were frequently available in areas with a high concentration of elderly citizens; space and program requirements could readily be accommodated in the classrooms and support spaces in the schools; and these programs could be started without additional public capital investments.

Former school buildings have been converted to senior citizen centers which provide for such programs and services as: educational programs - consumer, continuing; counseling services - information and referral, food stamp, SSI and SS benefit assessment, fuel assistance, legal aid; health - screening, blood pressure checks, annual health fairs, hospital equipment loans, Vial-of-Life; transportation; nutrition - congregate meals, Meals on Wheels; Gateway I and II; recreation programs - arts and crafts; and physical fitness - aerobics, health talks.

In those situations where the former school is larger than needed, the programs occupy a portion of the building and can easily expand within the walls of the facility.

The Maryland legislature recognizes the resource that the former school

buildings represent. Funds are provided specifically for the conversion of these buildings to serve the elderly population. State, local, and federal funds are often coupled to support the programs in these centers.

Several surplus school buildings have also been converted to provide housing for elderly citizens. The projects have been under government auspices, nonprofit entities, or the private sector. This type of housing enables the elderly citizens to stay in their community near family and friends.

Elderly citizens also find opportunities in surplus space in operating school buildings. These include classrooms, access to the school media center (library), art and music rooms, and cafeterias. These citizens can also provide valuable support to the educational program through volunteer activities.

The use of surplus public school buildings for senior citizen centers or housing has met the needs of the elderly economically and efficiently. The continued use and reuse of these buildings avoids significant capital expenditures in established communities. These functions are compatible with the surrounding area and generally meet with community acceptance. The resistance, if any, may simply be the communities' reaction to the closing of the public schools.

## ZONING

Phillips M. Schwartz

In those jurisdictions where surplus schools are no longer needed for public purposes, it is desirable to market them to the private sector. This enables counties to offset outstanding bonded indebtedness, eliminate operating/maintenance costs, reduce insurance liabilities, and return the properties to the tax rolls, benefiting the entire community. Since most schools are located in or adjacent to residential areas, the proposed adaptive reuse of a surplus school frequently conflicts with local zoning ordinances. In some political subdivisions prospective purchasers are faced with an 18-month to a two-year waiting period from the time of filing a rezoning application to a final decision by the zoning authority. This extended delay places an unfair burden on a prospective buyer whose equity and, most likely, financing could be tied up during the prolonged rezoning period. And if the proposed zoning is denied, the prospective buyer loses in several ways: he has lost the time required for the rezoning process in the world of real estate development and financing where time is money; he has also lost the money and personnel time required to go through a rezoning procedure. Likely, the return on the investment in the project is minimal.

In an effort to reduce the time required for rezoning and still protect the interest of the local area surrounding a closed school, the Prince George's County Government through its planning agency, the Maryland National Capital Park and Planning Commission, developed proposed legislation for the Adaptive Reuse of Surplus Schools. Briefly, the proposed legislation provided for special exception for uses, not otherwise allowable in residential and commercial zones, when occupying land on which an existing surplus public school building stands.

When the local municipalities received the proposed legislation for their review and comment, the immediate reaction was that their right to oppose a prospective rezoning was being curtailed and unanimously opposed the proposal. In fact, it has been county policy to meet with the local municipality, civic associations, and community groups to discuss proposed reuses for surplus schools in their area and to solicit their ideas and suggestions for compatible uses. The county recognized from the very beginning of the program that if a majority of the community opposed a proposed reuse of a closed school, the use would not succeed.

Several of the municipalities suggested that if the county included a list of uses that would not be considered for a surplus school, the legislation would be acceptable. The county felt that this suggestion would seriously curtail any flexibility in the Adaptive Reuse Program. While some uses of a school may not work in some areas, they very well might work in others.

The proposed Special Exception legislation was introduced in November 1983, passed by the Prince George's County Council in 1984. It provides that the application for a Special Exception must be for a specific use not otherwise allowable in residential and commercial zones and that if the use does not work out and another use is contemplated, a new Special Exception must be applied for. In this way, the communities' right to a role in any adaptive reuse is protected.

The legislation is currently being tested in several municipalities in Prince George's County. Only time will determine whether the Special Exception legislation will meet community and developmental needs.



THE YEARS AHEAD



## PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

Yale Stenzler

During the past ten to fifteen years, there have been significant changes in family/size; shifts in population; and changes in the composition of the work force. These special and economic changes have affected the use of public school buildings for such things as lifelong learning, community-school centers, day care and pre-school programs, shared use of facilities with other government and non-government agencies, and the sale or lease of surplus educational space. These past experiences can help decision makers plan for and adapt to the continuing changes that are before them in the decades ahead.

Site Selection - Sites for public schools are usually selected to be at or near the center of the proposed public school attendance area with the highest concentration of students and generally in residential areas. It may be more practical to select a site that can serve the student population economically (transportation cost) and in the future be easily converted to serve other needs while being compatible with adjacent zoning and/or usage requirements. Resale potential and value can be increased significantly.

Renovation for Other Uses - New school facilities and renovations of existing buildings can be planned and constructed/renovated to be more readily adaptable to uses other than public education. Architects and their consultants could develop a school project that will adapt to an alternative use in the future - i.e., housing, offices, community or municipal centers. Flexibility for established design functions may be possible at no additional cost and would be considered a wise investment for the future.

Existing Facilities for School Purposes - In some communities, existing large buildings could be renovated rather than building "new facilities" to serve educational needs. These buildings could serve the educational needs of the community for several generations and if no longer needed, revert to the former or other educational usage. Structures such as an office building, department store, hotel, warehouse, civic center, and even historic buildings, could be considered.

Expansion and Contraction of Programs - School buildings can be constructed and/or occupied by a combination of educational, education related, and/or compatible non-educational users. There may be times in the life of the facility that a particular group, agency, or program needs additional space. Through

mutual agreements and flexible arrangements, space within the facility is assigned or reassigned to meet these changing needs. This versatility is extremely valuable when public school enrollments fluctuate.

Expansion and Contraction of Facilities - It is possible to design public school buildings that can be expanded through the construction of an addition(s) or contracted by the removal of components. This concept can be accomplished through the construction of permanent central core facilities and classroom space for at least the minimum number of students to be served long range. Relocatable classrooms are then added to meet peak enrollment needs and can be removed when enrollments decline.

Public facilities are an asset in the community that should be maintained, protected, and utilized to best serve the community's needs. Shifts or changes in population and/or needs can be accommodated.

The examples cited above can be considered individually or in combination. Other options are also available that warrant attention. Information and technology are available to make educational facilities flexible and adaptable to uses other than "education only." Specific circumstances and individual school system needs should influence the decisions pertaining to the design, construction, and utilization of public school facilities in the future.

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